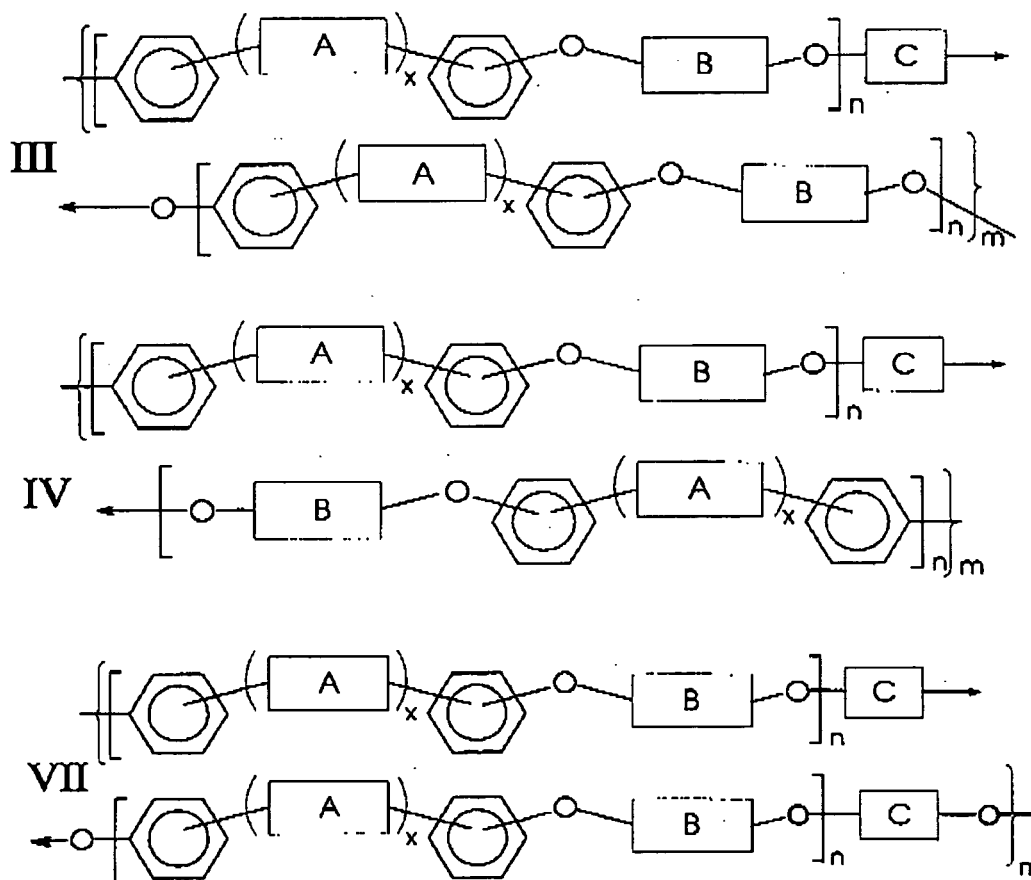


Application No. 10/722,326

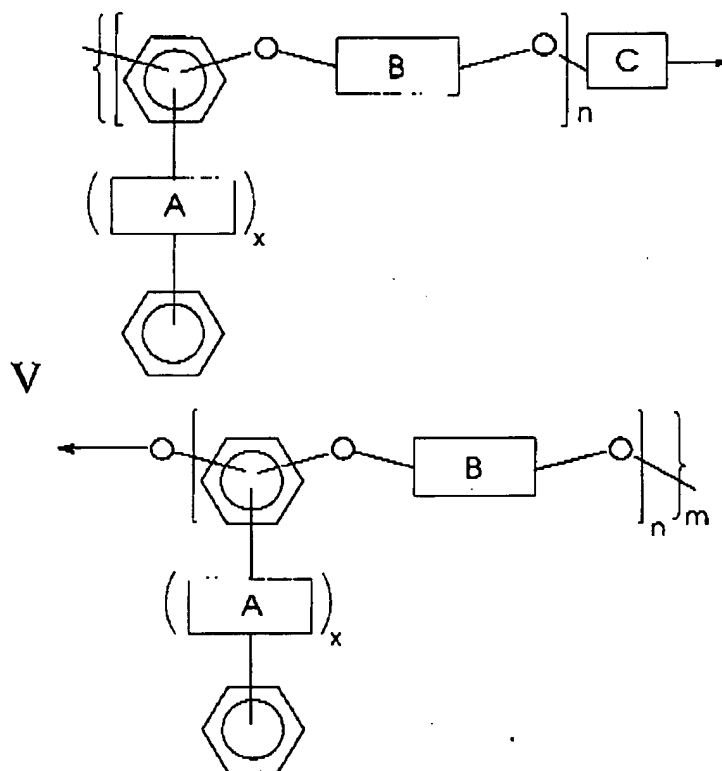
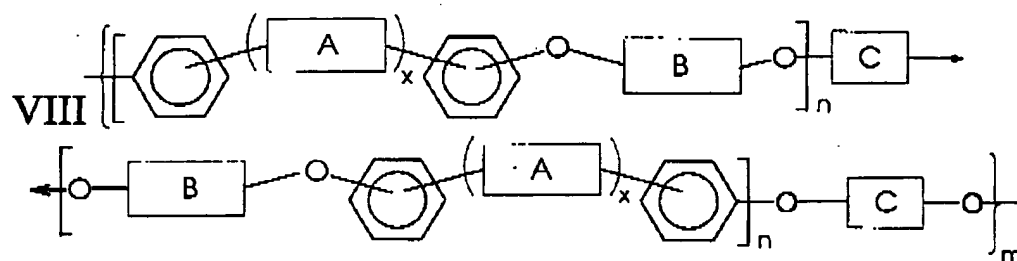
REMARKS

Claims 1 to 33 are pending in the application. The Examiner has subjected the claims to a restriction requirement and claims 32 and 33 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 to 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fuller et al. (U.S. Patent 5,814,426).

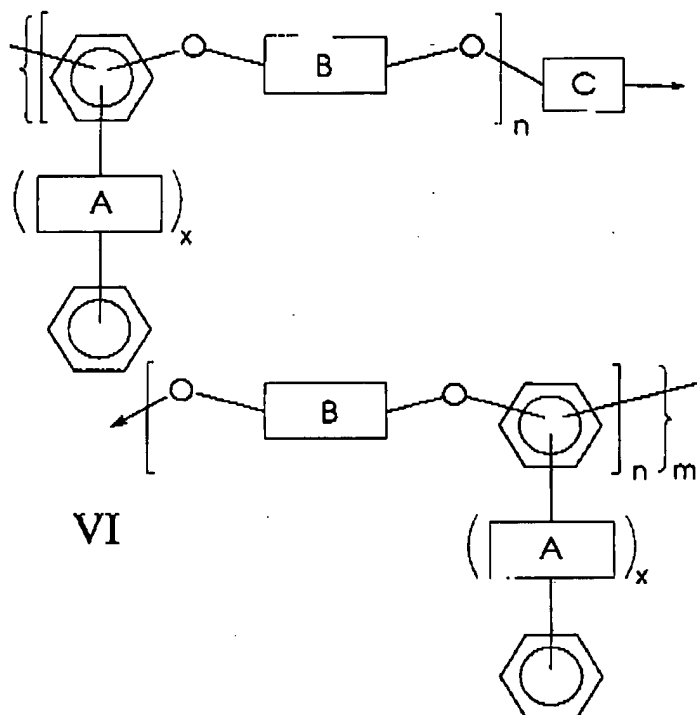
The Examiner has stated that Fuller et al. teaches polymers having the formulae



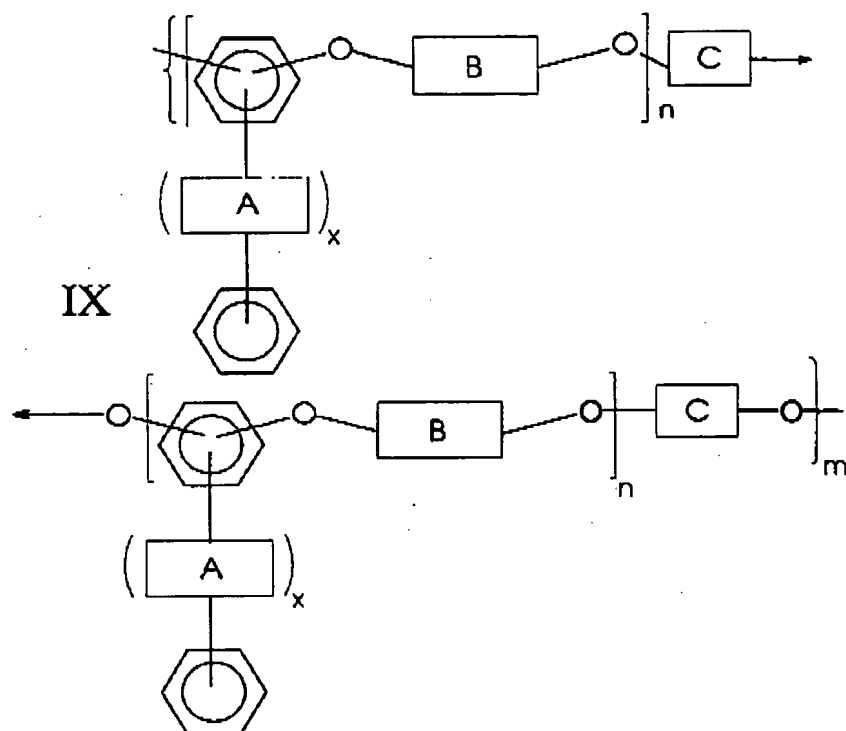
Application No. 10/722,326



Application No. 10/722,326

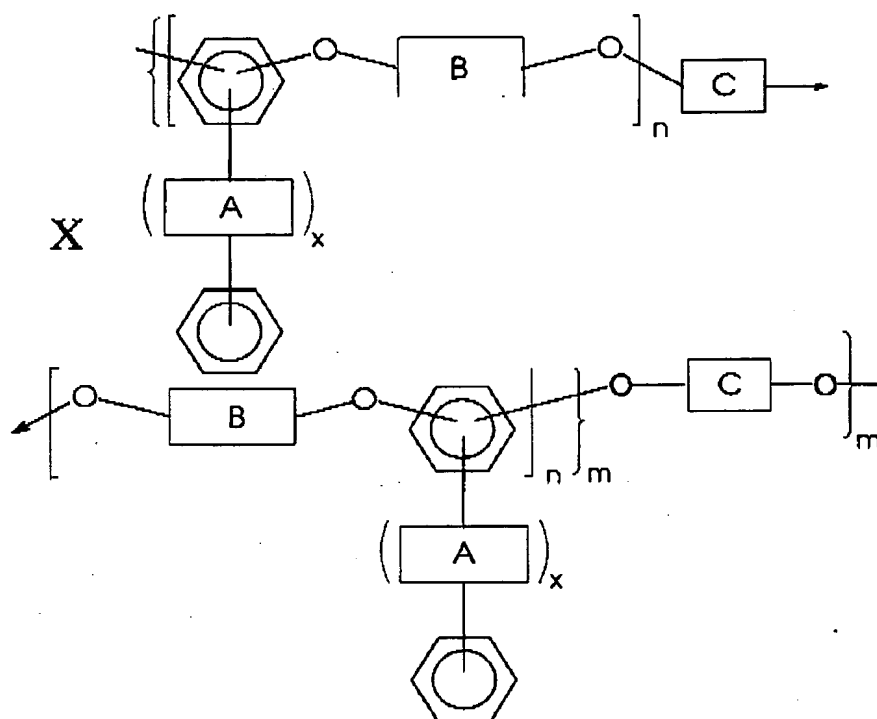


Application No. 10/722,326

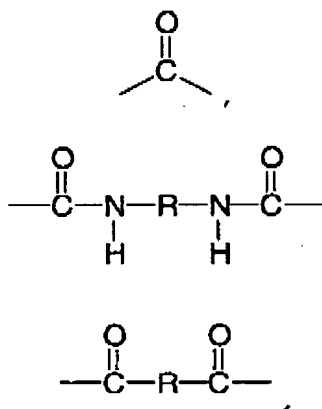


or

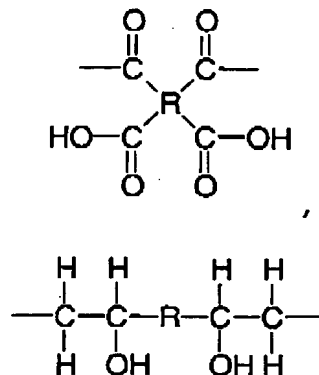
Application No. 10/722,326



wherein C is



Application No. 10/722,326



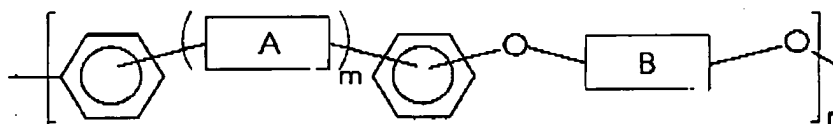
or mixtures thereof, wherein R is an alkyl group, an aryl group, an arylalkyl group, or mixtures thereof.

The Examiner is of the position that the disclosure of the reference differs from the instant claims in that it does not disclose the claimed phenolic compound of the formula $\text{Ar}(\text{OH})_x$ wherein $x > 3$; the Examiner has stated that the reference does disclose a C component in that the last formula can be considered $\text{Ar}(\text{OH})_4$ as in the claims, and is of the position that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select the phenolic compound from the reference within the limitations of the instant claims since they have been shown to be effective in a similar system and thus would have been expected to provide adequate results and that there is no showing of unexpected results derived from said selection.

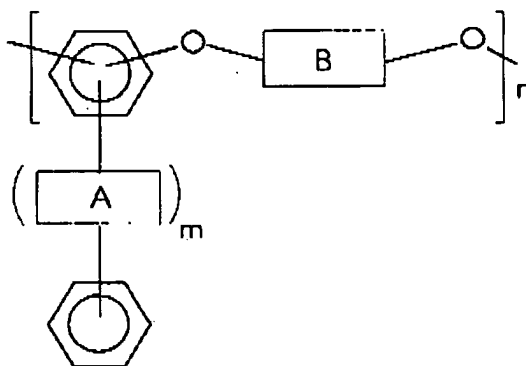
Applicants disagree with this position. The instant claims are directed to a process for preparing a branched polyarylene polymer. The process begins by providing a polyfunctional phenol compound of the formula $\text{Ar}(\text{OH})_x$ wherein $x \geq 3$ and wherein Ar is an aryl moiety or an alkylaryl moiety, provided that when Ar is an alkylaryl

Application No. 10/722,326

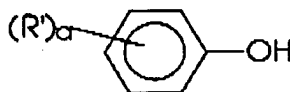
moiety at least three of the -OH groups are bonded to an aryl portion thereof. One or more linear polymers of the formula



or



optionally, a compound of the formula



and a carbonate base are heated, and generated water is removed from the reaction mixture, thereby effecting a polymerization reaction to form a branched polymer.

The Examiner has pointed to nothing in Fuller et al. that either teaches or suggests a method for preparing branched polyarylene ether polymers based on polyol starting materials. In addition, the Examiner has pointed to nothing in Fuller et al. that either teaches or suggests forming polymers based on starting materials that comprise polyfunctional phenol compounds of the formula $\text{Ar}(\text{OH})_x$

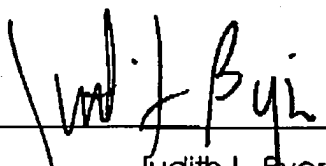
Application No. 10/722,326

wherein $x \geq 3$ and wherein Ar is an aryl moiety or an alkylaryl moiety, provided that when Ar is an alkylaryl moiety at least three of the -OH groups are bonded to an aryl portion thereof. Accordingly, Applicants are of the position that the present invention is patentable with respect to the cited reference.

Applicants further respectfully request reconsideration and rejoinder of claims 32 and 33 upon allowance of claims 1 through 31.

In the event the Examiner considers personal contact advantageous to the disposition of this case, he is hereby authorized to call Applicant(s) attorney, Judith L. Byorick, at Telephone Number (585) 423-4564, Rochester, New York.

Respectfully submitted,



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